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MARY PRYOR

A LIFE STORY OF A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

CONSECRATED WOMEN.

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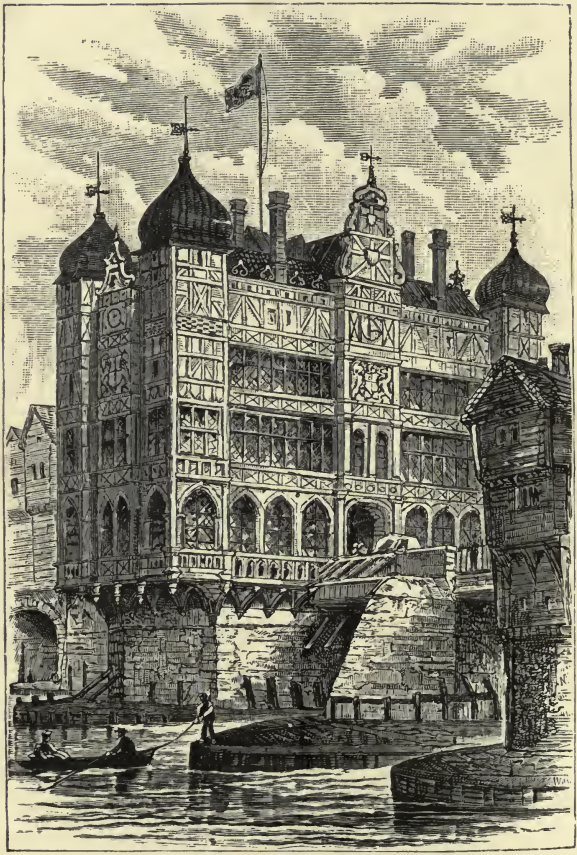

THE NONESUCH HOUSE,
On Old London Bridge, 1647.

[Haick, Mary Pryor

MARY PRYOR.

A LIFE STORY

OF A

HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

By the Author of

"CONSECRATED WOMEN," "FAITHFUL SERVICE,"
"CHRISTIAN WOMANHOOD," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

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PREFACE.

THIS simple history of a devoted but unobtrusive life is written specially for Mary Pryor's descendants, who are scattered over the world. The narrative is accompanied with the desire that they may find encouragement from her example of whole-hearted allegiance to her God and Saviour.

Her last surviving grandchild (my beloved father), who has, during this year, passed into the Home beyond, cherished her memory to the last with deep affection and reverence; and I feel that we of our generation are passing

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on to the younger ones a sacred trust, which he and his contemporaries in kinship have handed down to us.

Others, outside the circle of relations, have expressed a wish to possess the narrative, and I would venture to hope that they too may find their faith stimulated by Mary Pryor's simple trust and faithful obedience, which were so manifestly rewarded.

MARY PRYOR HACK.

BRIGHTON, 1886.

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From Birth to Marriage.

Life is only bright when it proceedeth
Towards a truer, deeper life above;
Human love is sweetest when it leadeth
To a more Divine and perfect love.

—*A. A. Proctor.*

CHAPTER I.

FROM BIRTH TO MARRIAGE.

In an ancient account-book of the expenditure of the Lord Mayor of London, there is, under the date of 1558, the following entry :—"Paid to Durran, the paynter, to bye colours to paynt the vaute at Maior's Palace, in part payment, XXXs to ley the vaute in oyle colours substantially. The quote part in jasper colour as the newe house on London Bridge is, all the rayles in stone colour, the small pillars in perfect green colour."

The "newe house on London Bridge," which supplied such a brilliant pattern for the Lord Mayor's palace, was made entirely of wood, brought over from Holland in pieces ready to be fitted together. Even the fastenings were of wooden pegs, not a nail being used in the whole fabric. It bore the name of Nonesuch House, and when erected in the reign of Elizabeth, was accounted "the wonder of London."

It stood near the Southwark end, with a drawbridge in front, and projected beyond the bridge both east and west. An arch in the centre, twenty feet wide, spanned the roadway. At each corner of the building were towers, while crowning the centre

of the front, and on two sides were elaborately carved gables. On each gable facing the river were sundials, one bearing the appropriate motto, "Time and tide wait for no man." The whole building was ornamented with a profusion of casement windows having richly carved panels and galleries in front of them and gilded pillars between.

Many other stately edifices, with archways beneath, over the road, adorned the bridge. In 1632, forty-two of these were burnt down, but they were rebuilt much in the former style. Later, many smaller houses were erected on either side, with an open road between, taking the place of the covered causeway. The

bridge suffered severely in the great fire of 1666, and never regained its former splendour.

Nonesuch House was, as we have said, near the south end of the bridge, and escaped destruction by the fires; and it is stated in a survey of the cities of London and Westminster, that in the early part of last century, "one-half of this house was occupied by Mr. Bray,[1] a stationer, and the other half by Mr. West, a drysalter."

It was here that Mary Bray, the subject of this sketch, was born in 1737. All that we know of her child-

[1] It is believed that this name comes from the Dutch Brahe, the same name as that borne by Tycho Brahe.

hood may be told in few words. Her father, Andrew Bray, son of Nathanael Bray, formerly of Hertford, was a rag merchant, and a member of the Society of Friends. Her mother, also a Friend, belonged to the West family. Mary had one sister named Eleanor, and a brother Nathanael; and the children were early left motherless.

Mary seems to have been carefully brought up; but as she grew older, she was for a time in danger of being led into worldliness. On one occasion, when about to be introduced into unsuitable company, she said to a companion, as they were walking together, "I can go no further." This

act of Christian decision brought much peace, and she told one of her daughters in after life that she "hardly ever felt more true joy than at that time in her solitary walk home."

She again showed her decision of character, when, if report be true, she was asked by a rich merchant (the founder of the Hope family), to become his second wife, and refused, to the chagrin of her old nurse, who is said to have remarked, "You might have eaten gold," receiving from her young mistress the smart and wise reply, "But I could not have digested it."

Andrew Bray gave a considerable dowry to each of his daughters on

their respective marriages. Eleanor [1] was married in 1757 to John Stevens, and Mary to John Pryor, a wool-stapler of Hertford, in 1760.

John Pryor was the second of the six children of William and Sarah Pryor. His mother's maiden name was Burr.

On her marriage, Mary Pryor went to reside at Hertford. Her new home was in the town, and not far from the river Lea. The house was old, with a hall in the centre, opening on to a small square court, in which were

[1] Eleanor Stevens' daughter Mary married Thomas Gates, and was the grandmother of T. G. Darton, Maria Allen, the late Jane Horne, etc.

also entrances to the dining-room and the kitchen. The house was studded with small windows, many of which were closed, in order to avoid the heavy window-tax. The pleasant garden ran down to the river, and thus won for the place the name of Waterside.[1] John Pryor was, like his wife, a member of the Society of Friends, and she soon entered into a position of usefulness in the meeting at Hertford.

[1] The appearance of Waterside is now greatly changed, the house having been let off in tenements, and the delightful garden, in which three generations of Mary Pryor's descendants played, has been built over. Cottages have also been built on the right hand side of the house.

In personal appearance Mary Pryor was of fair complexion, with a bright colour, which she retained through life. She was fond of reading, and lively in conversation; and being, as we have seen, of great decision of character and, at the same time, genial, she was much looked up to and beloved.

She was also kind and generous; indeed, her husband sometimes thought she gave away too freely. She had a special care for invalids, and when she had any delicacies on the table, she always liked to send portions to her sick neighbours.

Family Cares and Service for the Church.

In meek obedience utterance giving
To words of truth, so fresh and living,
That, ever to the inward sense
They bore unquestioned evidence
Of an anointed messenger.

—*J. G. Whittier.*

CHAPTER II.

FAMILY CARES AND SERVICE FOR THE CHURCH.

MARY PRYOR'S first child was born in the autumn of 1761. She was named Mary, and was the eldest of eight children, seven of whom lived to mature age.

It must have been soon after the birth of her first child that Mary Pryor began to speak in the meetings of her people. She had felt the call to exercise the ministry of the word for some months, and had often retired to be alone with her Lord, that she

might the more clearly discern His will. We are told that her "ministry was acceptable to her friends," and that "her genuine love and simplicity gained her the esteem of those with whom she laboured."

In reference to the public ministry of women we cannot do better than quote a passage from a volume[1] recently published :

"The Society of Friends, as is well known, recognise the ministry of women, in subjection to the government of Christ, under the guidance of His Spirit. They conceive that the gospel is not,

[1] "Memorials of Christine Alsop, compiled by Martha Braithwaite. Harris & Co., 5, Bishopsgate Without."

in this or in any other respect, a dispensation narrower than the law. They believe, with the Prophet Joel and the Apostle Peter, that it is a dispensation under which 'daughters' as well as 'sons' are to 'prophesy' (Joel ii. 28–32; Acts ii. 16, 17). Accepting the apostolic definition, that to 'prophesy' is 'to speak unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort' (1 Cor. xiv. 3), they do not overlook the fact that the Apostle Paul himself gives directions as to the exercise by women of this gift (1 Cor. xi. 5); that he freely recognised the services of Priscilla as well as Aquila, and that he was a guest at Cæsarea, in the house of Philip the Evangelist, who had 'four daughters'

who 'all prophesied.' It was not, they are persuaded, the design of the Apostle to nullify, by words of seeming restriction employed by him on two occasions, the great principle authoritatively asserted and acted on. The seeming restriction is rather, in their view, to be itself interpreted and limited in harmony with the general principle."

The secret of Mary Pryor's power and influence did not lie in the possession of large talents, but in seeking to live near to her Lord, and in looking for His direction, not only in her religious service, but also in the affairs of daily life. The teaching of the Society of Friends has ever been clear and emphatic on the necessity of this guidance

and communion, that the spiritual life may be maintained in a healthy condition. It is true that, at the time in which Mary Pryor lived, the religious life in many of the churches in this country was at a low ebb, and that the Society of Friends did not escape the general declension. It is, therefore, all the more refreshing to notice the many within its borders at that time, who, like herself, were conscientiously living up to their Christian profession, and were shining as lights in the world.

Mary Pryor's solicitude for the spiritual well-being of her children was great, and it was her custom to gather her little ones in her chamber from time to time for prayer.

Her eldest daughter—a bright, lively girl—was early brought to the Lord, and was a great comfort to her mother, with whom she seems to have been on terms of close intimacy in regard to religious things.

The following extracts are from letters written to this daughter when she was away from home. Mary Pryor writes in 1777, when Mary was about sixteen.

"My dear Polly,—I was much pleased to hear, by Joseph Bevan, that thou wast at Dover, as well as the manner of thy going there. I hope it is a mark that thou hast the good cause at heart; but thou hast [disappointed] me in not writing, as

I long to hear, not only how Cousin Betsy is, but of the meeting at Dover. I hope Truth arose and appeared in its ancient beauty. I thought the seed was not only sown in many hearts there, but was precious to some in that county, and I trust will have the dominion in such minds; and I doubt not you had a humbling, refreshing season. I hope *we* felt a degree of the baptizing power in our sitting this morning. . . . Oh, saith my soul, that we may be thoroughly cleansed before we go hence! There is no other way for 'Zion to be redeemed but by judgment, and her converts with righteousness.'"

It was about this time that Mary

first spoke as a minister, and shortly after, with the sanction of the Church, she accompanied a minister from America on a religious mission to the West of England and Wales. Thus began that interest in America and American Friends which deepened and widened as time went on.

Mary was visiting at Sheffield in 1778. The following letter from her mother was written in London, where John and Mary Pryor seem often to have stayed :—

"It is not lessened affection that has prevented my writing so often as thou might wish, for I think thou never wast nearer the affectionate part in me than of late; and I was thankful to

observe the disposition thou appears to be in, in thy two last letters. It brought to my remembrance a little [religious time] we had together at J. Lister's, at Newington, when, if I am not mistaken, thou made a covenant with thy Heavenly Father somewhat like that of Jacob, which covenant I have a secret hope thou hast been enabled to renew."

In 1780, M. P. writes to Mary, who had gone to take her young sister Sally to school :—

"I long to see you all. My thoughts are often engaged for thee in particular. And I have thought, if thou art faithful to what is manifested to be thy duty, thou may cause a blessing to be be-

stowed on our family, even like the dew of Hermon that descended upon the mountains of Zion, where the blessing was commanded, even life for evermore. May this be extended to the nethermost of the family, even to my little ones, is my earnest petition to the Father and Fountain of all our living mercies."

The youngest child, Samuel, was at this time six years of age.

In 1783, Mary Pryor writes to Mary, who was again in Yorkshire :—

"I wished thee to be at York Quarterly Meeting if way opened for it, therefore am pleased to find it is likely to be so. If thou could lodge at William or Henry Tuke's, I believe thou

would find it satisfactory; but I leave that to thy best Director, on whom I desire thy eye may be steadily fixed. If it be best for us that we be longer separated, I believe our consolation will be the greater when we are favoured with thy return, which, that it may not be sooner than thou art quite easy, is my earnest desire. I intreat thee, my dear child, be faithful to that precious gift that is committed to thy trust, remembering that they that are faithful in the little will be made rulers over more. A glorious crown of immortality awaits the faithful follower of Jesus, who was made perfect through suffering, who trod the winepress alone, that He might succour His little ones, and

is worthy to be followed even through the deeps."

In the same letter, Mary Pryor confesses a shortcoming :—

"I had something to say to my dear son John the morning when he took his leave of me, in which I was not faithful; and that, among other sins of omission, has troubled me; but the affectionate part got up, and as it was I believe a little matter [which would have been] pretty close, I was loath to grieve him, although it might have been godly sorrow that worketh repentance to salvation. May thou take warning by my omission, and may both of us stand more resigned to know our own wills subject."

In 1786, Mary was married to Joseph Savory, of Cheapside, a widower with four children. He was of a genial temper, seeking to make all around him happy. He and his wife were closely united, and it was a great pleasure to both to keep open house, not only for their relations, but for those travelling on Gospel missions. Their house seems to have been the head-quarters of ministers from America visiting England, and this large intercourse with friends from that land made their names familiar on the other side of the Atlantic.

In 1791, Mary Pryor's second son, William, married Elizabeth Squire, from Bedfordshire, and in 1793 her second daughter, Sarah, married Daniel Hack,

of Brighton. This daughter was exceedingly lively, and must have been greatly missed in the home.

It was not till after her eldest daughter's marriage, and when her younger children were at school, that Mary Pryor felt called to travel in the work of the ministry.

Guidance and Protection.—Call to go on a Gospel Mission to the United States.

When it is well with thee before thy God,
  Remember those with whom it is not well,
Bear them upon thy heart before that God
  In whose glad presence thou hast learned to dwell.

* * * * *

Plead for the weary earth upon whose breast
  Ages of evil and unrighteousness
Have lain, unbroken by one hour of rest;
  Plead for the hastening of the age of peace.

Plead for the advent of the promised King,
  The reign of heavenly glory here on earth,
The budding of the world's eternal spring,
  The coming of creation's second birth.

—*Bonar.*

CHAPTER III.

GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION.—CALL TO GO ON A GOSPEL MISSION TO THE UNITED STATES.

THERE was a tradesman in Hertford who had gone on prospering till he had taken a high position in the town. But he fell into bad, drinking ways, and, on his becoming ill, Mary Pryor felt it laid upon her heart to visit him. She accordingly went to his house one evening, and pleaded for an interview with him, but was refused by his family. As she returned along

a lonely road in the dusk, she saw two suspicious-looking men coming towards her. Turning round, she observed a man of more gentlemanly appearance behind, and waited till he came up. She then asked if she might walk with him for protection, and he accompanied her towards her house. As they passed the two men, she noticed that they looked curiously at her and her companion. On parting from him, she asked who it was to whom she was indebted for this act of courtesy, and he gave his name as that of a noted highwayman, the leader of a band of robbers.

Mary Pryor's thankfulness over her preservation must have been mingled

with pain when she heard that that very night the poor man to whom she had tried to carry a message of mercy had put an end to his wretched existence. At the same time she must have rejoiced that she had accepted her Lord's call, and had let no obstacle prevent her from going on His errand. She had thus no cause to reproach herself.

On another occasion, M. P.'s faithfulness was rewarded by her being made the means of saving a life. She was busy in domestic matters, when she felt an intimation that she ought to call on a person two miles away. She put off the impression, but it came again, and yet again; and at

last she laid aside her employment, and putting on her cloak and hood, started in pouring rain to pay the visit. Reaching the house, she sat down with her friend, and addressing her in the name of her Master, expressed the belief that she had been sorely cast down, but that the Lord would never permit her to be so tried again. M. P. spoke other words of comfort and assurance to her, and at the close of the interview, the sorrowful woman confessed that her faith had indeed well-nigh failed her, and she took M.P. to a cupboard, and showed her the bottle of poison which she had intended to take in the afternoon of the same day.

In 1796, Mary Pryor visited her son Nathanael, who was living at Leeds. At this time eight Friends were imprisoned in York Castle for refusing to pay ecclesiastical demands. Mary Pryor's heart was drawn out in sympathy towards them, and she paid them a visit, and then, with much difficulty, obtained an interview with their prosecutor. She writes to her husband :—

"Way has been made for me to have an interview with the prosecutor of our Friends now in York Castle. He heard me without interruption, but afterwards endeavoured to exculpate himself, and lay their sufferings on the laws. He appeared in some pertur-

bation of mind, and I am ready to think is going against conviction. . . . If I am not mistaken, it seems best for me to return by Upperthorpe [and] Doncaster. I continue much favoured with health and a desire to do right, in which I conclude,

"Thy affectionate wife."

Joseph Browne, one of the prisoners mentioned above, wrote to Mary Pryor in reference to her visit :—

"York Castle,

"*1st month* 15*th*, 1796.

"Thy very kind and acceptable letter came duly to my hand. . . . I was right glad to find thou hadst been so remarkably favoured with an

opportunity of relieving thy mind, and hope thou wilt experience peace to be the reward of such faithful dedication. I thought, as thou remarks, it was indeed cause for thankfulness and humble admiration, how He, who is wisdom unsearchable, can open ways for the performance of His will through the humble, dependent and obedient mind. Give my love to thy husband and to the rest of thy family—daughter Nancy in particular.

"The committee of men-Friends appointed by our Quarterly Meeting are gone to visit our dear connexions at Lothersdale, it being thought best by Friends that our children should be got out to different places. David

Sands was at our meeting last First Day; a number of the prison debtors attended, some of whom were tendered.

"So conclude with dear love, in which love I am united by my companions in bonds,

"Thy truly affectionate friend,

"JOSEPH BROWNE."

The term of imprisonment suffered by these Friends lasted two years and five months. It may be mentioned, that, during part of the time, they had the agreeable companionship of James Montgomery, the poet, who was sent to York Castle on a charge for libel in the *Sheffield Iris*, of which he was editor.

One of the eight Friends, John Wilkinson, died in prison; the others were liberated in 1797. A few years later, Montgomery wrote, on the death of Joseph Browne, those beautiful lines beginning—

"Spirit, leave thine house of clay."

Mary Pryor seems to have been greatly exercised in reference to the war with America. So heavily, indeed, did it rest on her mind, that she three times sought and obtained an interview with King George III. in order to implore him to use his influence to put an end to it. One of her great-grandchildren writes :—

"I am disappointed at being unable

to find the record of these visits, written by her companion. I remember being struck with how much in advance of the public opinion of that day were her remarks on the falseness of the system the government was pursuing, and the certainty of its ultimate failure."

On one occasion she addressed a letter to the king. This we insert :—

"Suffer, O King, a faithful, affectionate subject, to intreat thee once more to abolish the slave trade and to make peace. I believed it was the word of the Lord to thee, and I found great peace after I had delivered that message to thee some years ago ;

but of late I have felt, as I apprehended, a new concern, to intreat thee with all the tenderness of affection I am capable of, to consider the calamitous situation we are now reduced to.

"Suffer me to beg for thy earnest endeavours speedily to bring about these two great points; for I believe that now, under this glorious dispensation (which breathes forth a language similar to that of the holy angels at the birth of the blessed Jesus, the Saviour of men, 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and goodwill unto men'), the continuance of these two great evils is an abomination to the Majesty of heaven, and may be the means of bringing upon the land

greater calamities than those we now suffer.

"Even now, the most industrious and frugal poor, who labour early and late, cannot purchase the necessaries of life. Many of these, thy most useful and worthy subjects, are, I believe, ready to sink under their burdens, for want of a sufficient portion of bread.

"May the God of all grace, mercy, and truth instruct and strengthen thee to do His will.

"This from thy faithful friend and subject,

"MARY PRYOR."

After the close of the war she felt

called to visit the meetings of Friends in America.

She thus writes of this prospect to her daughter, Mary Savory :—

"HERTFORD,

"*8th month 5th*, 1797.

"Believing the time fully come, and having been permitted to try the fleece wet and dry, I ventured to spread the concern before our Monthly Meeting last Fourth Day, and believe I had the sympathy of many near and dear friends with whom I left it, believing, if they should advise against it, the will would be accepted. . . . The closest trial has been the prospect of being separated from thy dear father;

but He who in mercy gave him to me has an undoubted right to separate us, and I feel no cause for murmuring, believing, if I leave him and my dear children, it will be in the arms of a merciful and gracious Father; and if it were possible for me to have more to give up, He is abundantly worthy of the sacrifice, for I have no one blessing but is His precious gift. . . . No doubt my friends as well as myself are astonished that the Most High should make use of so mean an instrument; but who amongst us shall dare say to Omnipotence, 'What doest Thou?' or shall the clay query with Him who has the forming it—'Why hast Thou made me thus?' Was not

the ram's horn used as well as more dignified instruments? I do not feel ability to write much, but thought it might be as pleasant to thee to have these hints from myself as from any other quarter. We are all favoured with a good degree of health, and what is better, I hope a good degree of resignation, in which I remain, with the salutation of love, not only to thy husband and self, but dear George and Sarah [Dillwyn], a precious part of your family,

"Thy affectionate mother."

Before Mary Pryor decided in what vessel to sail for America she visited several of the best ships of the period;

but she did not feel easy to take her passage in any of them. However, on sitting down in an inferior vessel called the *Fame*, she said that she felt "so comfortable," that she must go in that ship. Her son William, who was an underwriter at Lloyds', tried to dissuade her, having learned that the ship was considered unseaworthy; and a relative, named Thomas Backhouse, posted from London to Hertford, to warn her against it. On his telling her that he would not trust one of his dogs in it, she asked for a time of quiet, in which to seek the Lord's direction in the matter. She saw no light, however, upon any change of plan, and her place was taken in the *Fame*.

Voyage to America and Foundering of the Ship.

Thou workest perfectly. And if it seem
Some things are not so well, 'tis but because
They are too loving-deep, too lofty-wise,
For me, poor child, to understand their laws:
My highest wisdom half is but a dream;
My love runs helpless like a falling stream:
Thy good embraces ill, and lo! its stillness dies.

—*George Macdonald.*

CHAPTER IV.

VOYAGE TO AMERICA AND FOUNDERING OF THE SHIP.

HAVING, in accordance with the custom of the Society of Friends, been furnished with credentials from her monthly and other meetings, Mary Pryor started for the United States towards the end of 1797, when she was more than sixty years of age. She travelled quite alone. After leaving the docks, the *Fame* seems to have been detained near to land some ten or twelve days before fairly getting under weigh. During this time of

waiting Mary Pryor writes to her husband:—

"*Off* DUNGENESS,

"30*th of* 12*th month*, 1797.

"MY DEAR LOVE,

"The Captain thinks he can get a letter on shore to-morrow. We have hard blowing weather, but through unmerited mercy my mind is preserved in a good degree of quiet. Most of our passengers are sick. One sprightly youth says he will keep close to me. They all continue their kindness. . . . I was on deck yesterday, and walked with the help of the Captain's strong arm, for the motion was too great to walk alone. The good things my

dear children sent were very acceptable to the cabin passengers. We are now at anchor in sight of the lighthouse. Here are about forty-two ships, I suppose, like us, waiting for a more favourable wind. I wrote by the pilot when he left us off Deal. I hope, my dear, thou wilt endeavour to be content in the Divine will, and bear our separation with resignation to that gracious Being who has blessed us many ways, particularly with our dear children, who will be a comfort to thee, as they have been to me; and I trust the Lord will bless them and theirs, and be *your* staff and stay, and mine. Dear love to dear George Dillwyn and his Sarah, also T. Scattergood, etc. I cannot write

much. . . . What a nice youth would this T. Darley be, would he but enter as a scholar in the school of Christ. I yearn over him. . . . We had made many miles further, but the Captain was wise enough to put back for safe anchorage. We are a strange mixture on board—four or five different names of religion. The poor Frenchmen fast often: I hope they are sincere. I have no great opinion of our Jew; but I have no right to make this remark. I again salute thee and all our dear children in great affection and love, and remain thine,

"MARY PRYOR.

"P.S.—Addison's hymn has been much the companion of my mind."

This hymn, of which we give a few stanzas, was much more appropriate than she was then aware of, for though there was no severe outward storm while they were on the ocean, there must have been stormy waves of anxiety and fear surging through the hearts of many on board the *Fame* during the voyage, the incidents of which we are about to narrate :—

"How are Thy servants blest, O Lord!
How sure is their defence!
Eternal wisdom is their guide,
Their help Omnipotence.

"In foreign realms, and lands remote,
Supported by Thy care,
Through burning climes I passed unhurt,
And breathed the tainted air."

After describing a storm at sea, the poet goes on :—

"Yet then from all my griefs, O Lord,
Thy mercy set me free:
Whilst in the confidence of prayer,
My soul took hold on Thee.

* * * * *

"In midst of dangers, fears and death,
Thy goodness I'll adore,
And praise Thee for Thy mercies past,
And humbly hope for more.

"My life, if thou preserv'st my life,
Thy sacrifice shall be;
And death, if death should be my doom,
Will join my soul to Thee."

They had not been long at sea before the old vessel sprang a leak, and the water gained on them so rapidly, that it was with difficulty the sailors could keep it under. In a short time they were obliged to work unceasingly at the pumps. This went on for many weeks,

and eventually the passengers were called in to take their share in the work. The fatigue entailed was very great, and the labour appeared so hopeless that from time to time the men were entirely disheartened, and, without a great deal of encouragement, would inevitably have resigned themselves to their fate.

During this time Mary Pryor was preserved in great calmness, and, feeling that her work in the world was not yet done, expressed the persuasion that they would be rescued. She was much in prayer, sometimes in her cabin, and at other times she prayed aloud in the presence of the crew and passengers, asking that the Heavenly Father would preserve their lives.

These prayers made a great impression on those who heard them, leading one of the passengers to say long afterwards, "Mrs. Pryor was a wonderful woman in prayer." But she knew well that they must work as well as pray, and she made it her business to uphold the men by all the encouragement she could bring to bear upon them. She would often stand by them and stimulate them with words of confidence that their labour would not be in vain. But with all the united efforts of the crew and passengers their condition grew worse, for the water in the hold increased to the height of five feet, and even flowed into the cabins. The captain was such an intemperate man that he was of little use; for the

danger, instead of nerving him to action, only drove him to seek oblivion from his troubles in drink. As the prospect of rescue seemed to grow fainter and fainter, the labour at the pumps was felt to be almost intolerable, and the men were on the point of finally giving up all effort in despair. At this juncture Mary Pryor came out of her cabin early one morning, with a cheerful countenance, saying that she had "good news for the ship's company, for their deliverance was near at hand." She told them that she had had a dream or vision, in which she had seen a vessel coming to their help that very day, but that they must still use every exertion to keep the ship afloat till she should come in sight.

This announcement was made, as was narrated by a fellow-passenger, with evident confidence that it would be fulfilled in their experience. Mary Pryor further said that the name of the vessel had been told her, and she had forgotten it, but if the female passengers would mention their maiden names, it would recall it to her memory. The women on board were summoned, and one of the steerage passengers, who seems to have been acting as stewardess, said that her name had been Archibald. "That," said Mary Pryor, "is the name of the ship that will save us."

We may well imagine how anxiously all eyes were now turned towards the horizon, seeking some sign of the ap

proaching means of deliverance; but many hours of terrible suspense were yet to follow. The men were battling with tremendous odds, for, in spite of all their labour, the water gained ground, and the vessel continued gradually to sink. They "lightened the ship" by throwing overboard portions of the cargo, but all to no purpose, and again it seemed as if the worn-out hands would cease working in sheer hopelessness.

Once more Mary Pryor succeeded in arousing the exhausted energies of the men, pleading with them to persevere for only two hours more in their laborious service; and before the expiration of this interval a ship was descried in

the distance. They eagerly watched her movements, and continued to fire guns in rapid succession to attract attention. On perceiving their signals of distress, she made towards them, and the *Fame* sent an officer in her long-boat to inform the captain of the desperate condition to which they were reduced, and to implore assistance.

The vessel was a small Halifax schooner, named the *Archibald*, of sixty tons burden, heavily laden with cod-fish, and withal rather short of water, so that Captain Macey at first doubted if it would be possible for him to take on board an additional crew, with a number of passengers, seeing that 600 miles lay

between them and the American coast. However, on consultation, his own men were at once willing to go on short allowance of water, and there was still time to transfer some provisions from the *Fame* to the *Archibald;* and he quickly consented to take the party on board. When the passengers were about being transferred to the boats, Mary Pryor remembered that she had left something in her cabin. She was warned that if she went to fetch it she would have to wade knee-deep in water, and that there was no time to lose, as the vessel was filling fast; but she insisted on going, and procured the object of her search. This was a parcel which had been entrusted to her care by Thomas Scattergood, who

was at the time engaged in a religious mission in England.[1]

Efforts were made to get M. P.'s portmanteau out of the hold, but without success. The captain of the *Fame* was sober enough to see that Mary Pryor had been largely instrumental in saving the lives of passengers and crew; and when the first boat-load was being made up, he declared that she should remain till the last, saying, "The ship won't sink while she's on board." But the young man before mentioned, who had so attached himself to her, disapproving

[1] The letter (written at Waterside) which was contained in the parcel has been kept by T. Scattergood's descendants, also the record of its having been saved from the sinking vessel.

of this arrangement, courteously sprang forward, and lifted her into the boat. The passage from one ship to the other entailed fresh danger, and Mary Pryor was glad that it had not been possible to save her portmanteau, apprehending that the additional weight might have sunk the old leaky boat, which was in especial jeopardy, owing to the roughness of the sea. It was not until after midnight that the last boat passed from the *Fame* to the *Archibald*, and the seamen imagined that the ship could not possibly have remained afloat more than an hour or two longer.

In the little schooner the freight of codfish and oil so filled up the ship that there had been scarcely sufficient ac-

commodation for the crew belonging to the vessel. Under these circumstances, the new-comers had to make shift as best they could, and they were glad enough to lie down upon the codfish, or wherever any space could be found. Captain Macey gave up his own small cabin to Mary Pryor and another female passenger.

Mary Pryor went on board in a very wet condition, and remained in the same clothes till she reached her destination; yet she took no cold.

After a short interval they fell in with a vessel bound for New York, and the captain of the *Fame* and his crew were taken on board. This somewhat lessened the discomforts of those

who were left, and after two weeks spent in the *Archibald*, under the kind care of Captain Macey, they arrived at Philadelphia, about three months after they had left England.

PHILADELPHIA,
From a Lithograph Published in 1801.
In the foreground is the elm, under which, according to tradition, Penn made his great treaty with the Indians.

The Landing in Philadelphia, and Reception by her Friends.

In that delightful land which is washed by the Delaware's waters,
Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn the Apostle,
Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream the city he founded.
There all the air is balm, and the peach is the emblem of beauty,
And the streets still re-echo the names of the trees of the forest:
There from the troubled sea had Evangeline landed, an exile,
Finding among the children of Penn a home and a country.
Something at least there was in the friendly streets of the city,
Something that spoke to her heart, and made her no longer a stranger.
And her ear was pleased with the *thee* and *thou* of the Quakers,
For it recalled the past, the old Acadian country,
Where all men were free and equal, and all men were brothers and sisters.

—*Longfellow.*

CHAPTER V.

THE LANDING IN PHILADELPHIA, AND RECEPTION BY HER FRIENDS.

THE wharf at which the *Archibald* was to discharge her cargo in Philadelphia belonged to a "Friend" named Jonathan Willis, and when the captain went on shore and had told him his story, he added, "There is on board my vessel one of your Friends, whose name is Mary Pryor. You had better go and see her. She is a stranger here." Jonathan Willis felt a good deal excited by the unexpected tidings,

and having to make his way on his hands and knees through walls of codfish to reach her, he felt still more perturbed. But when he found Mary Pryor sitting quietly, her face expressive of serenity and cheerfulness, all his anxiety was dispelled. He asked her to take some refreshment at his house near the wharf, an invitation she gladly accepted, and he proceeded to escort her ashore. When she reached the wharf, notwithstanding the mud and the heavy rain falling at the time, Mary Pryor fell on her knees. A stranger, thinking she had stumbled, went to raise her, but her young protégé put him aside, saying, "Touch her not." Then the captain

and crew, by whom she was much beloved, with the passengers standing round, reverently uncovered their heads while she offered fervent thanksgiving to her Father in heaven for their great deliverance, and craved a blessing upon the captain, whom she called her "earthly benefactor."

After a meal at the house of Jonathan Willis, Mary Pryor wrote a few lines to her husband and children, to tell, as soon as possible, of her safe arrival, fearing they might hear a "worse account." She speaks of Captain Macey as having been "more like an affectionate son than a stranger." Already, she says, many Friends had called upon her; among those men-

tioned are the well-known names of James Pemberton, Samuel Emlen, and Nicholas Waln and wife. She ends the note by saying that she has no doubt but that her husband and children will join with her in thankfulness for so remarkable an interposition of Divine Providence. Later in the evening, Mary Pryor went to the house of James and Phœbe Pemberton, the latter fetching her in her carriage. These friends ministered to *all* her necessities with a delicate and large-hearted kindness.

The same evening John Warder of Philadelphia wrote to his friend John Capper in London :—

"PHILADELPHIA,

"*3rd month* 15*th*, 1798.

"I have just been to see Mary Pryor, who was a passenger on board the *Fame*. Please inform her friends *immediately* that she is well, after many hardships, the ship having foundered at sea, when all the passengers and crew saved their lives without even a change of clothes, being taken off the wreck by a small schooner. . . ."

There was *need* to inform Mary Pryor's friends quickly of her safety, for they had heard the "worse account," as she feared, a report having been received at "Lloyds'" that the *Fame* had gone down, and that all on board had perished. John Pryor's

grief knew no bounds; he literally tore his hair in his anguish; but his daughter Ann, who was living with him, seems to have clung to the belief that her mother was safe, even after hearing the tidings which appeared so hopeless. It was strongly impressed on her mind one evening that He who had called her mother to the special service in America would enable her to perform it, and that her life would be spared until it was accomplished. The next morning, just before waking, she seemed to see on a little table in front of the window, a half-sheet of paper with the address "Philadelphia" at the head of the page, and at the foot the signature "Mary Pryor" in her

mother's handwriting. The impression rested on her mind that this letter would arrive before the week was out, and these little intimations opened for her a door of hope which did not disappoint her.

It is probable that Ann Pryor's faith had been also confirmed by a visit which had just been paid to the family at Hertford, by a minister named Samuel Alexander, from Needham in Suffolk. He had come to Waterside some five or six months after Mary Pryor had started, and when, no tidings of the vessel having reached England, grave apprehensions as to her safety were taking possession of the minds of her husband and children.

Samuel Alexander did not refer to their feelings of suspense on the evening of his arrival, but next morning, while having a religious meeting with the family, he said that "it had been given him to see that the wife and mother was prosecuting her religious service on the other side of the water." On the same or the next day the notice to which we have referred appeared in the papers, stating that the vessel had foundered. Samuel Alexander was at first much distressed, but he soon recovered his peace of mind, believing that he had never had a clearer intimation of duty than when this message seemed given him to deliver. It must have been shortly after that infor-

mation reached Lloyds' that the crew and passengers had been saved. On hearing this William Pryor started at once, hoping to catch the coach for Hertford. He was too late, but he met a relative named Burr, who had just come from Hertford on horseback, and the latter, on hearing the state of the case, immediately dismounted and lent his horse to William Pryor, who proceeded to Waterside, bearing to his father the joyful tidings. He found him pacing the room in great distress of mind.

Very soon Mary Pryor's letter, confirming the account of her safety, arrived; it was written on the first piece of paper she could lay hands on just after she landed, and in it her

daughter recognised the half-sheet she had seen in her dream.

Rebecca Jones, a minister of the Gospel living in Philadelphia, had been intimately associated with Mary Pryor during a missionary visit to England in 1784–88, and she received the news of her arrival almost immediately. She was very much affected at hearing of her beloved friend's danger and providential deliverance, and early next morning hastened to visit her. Their intercourse during Mary Pryor's stay in Philadelphia was mutually delightful, and many of the particulars of the voyage have come down to her descendants through Rebecca Jones' pen. Most of Mary Pryor's own letters and

journals relating to the shipwreck were destroyed at her request. Years after her death, some of the incidents we have given were narrated to a Friend, by the fellow-passenger whose maiden name had been Archibald, the circumstances attending the disastrous voyage being so clearly engraven on her memory that she could not speak of them without being affected to tears. Later still, when William Forster (father of the late William Edward Forster, M.P.) was prosecuting a mission in the Southern States, in the interests of the slaves, he took tea with a descendant of hers, and heard the same story from his lips.[1]

[1] Long after the occurrence the story of the shipwreck was told to a Friend named Isaac

The day after reaching Philadelphia, Mary Pryor writes to her husband :—

"My dear Love,—I wrote thee last evening, soon after my landing at the wharf, before I came to my quarters at James Pemberton's. Truly [he] and his Phœbe appear as a prince and princess, both outwardly and inwardly, in our Israel. Pray for me, my beloved husband, that amidst so many favours I may be preserved in deep, heartfelt

Wright, of Manchester, by a sailor whom he accidentally met. The sailor, seeing he was a Friend, asked "Did you know a quakeress named Mary Pryor?" and being answered in the affirmative exclaimed, "That woman saved my life." He then proceeded to tell how she had encouraged the men to believe that they would be saved, and spoke of M. P. in terms of the warmest admiration.

humility, for I am sensible I shall stand in great need of it in our city, having already had (I believe) more than forty visitors. . . . We had two gentlemen to dine here, one from Italy, the other from Poland, companions to General Kosciusko; they appeared desirous of an acquaintance with Friends. I believe we all felt love to the strangers and some expressions of our feelings were uttered. Rebecca Jones has been to see me, also S. Savery and T. Scattergood's wife, John Warder and wife, etc. Our passengers have also been to express their love. I am expecting the captain of the schooner. Our steward has also been, to whom I gave thy present, and I believe a

Friend will take him into his service. All my pleadings could not get me excused from a fire in my bedroom night and morning. Thus, my dear, thy poor Mary is cared for abundantly. . . . This is like my son Savory's, a house of public resort for Friends, particularly [those] who are advocating the cause of truth or highly accounted of, and truly some are of the first rank. May the Lord Almighty bless and preserve thee, my beloved husband, and our dear children (His precious gifts), and in His own time, if it be His will, grant that we may again meet to acknowledge His goodness and tender mercy."

Mary Pryor attended the mid-week

meeting soon after her arrival, when an elderly minister rose, and in rather a stern tone commenced his address with the inquiry, "Where are the gold and the frankincense and myrrh?" After awhile Mary Pryor stood up, with the words, "Some of us feel that we have no gold nor frankincense nor myrrh to bring to our Lord, but we have this morning sat at His feet and washed them with our tears." This little incident was often referred to by the late Lydia Shipley, of Philadelphia, who was present at the meeting as a child, and who, to old age, would imitate the very tones of Mary Pryor's voice.

At one meeting, the young gentle-

man (or nobleman as he is called in Rebecca Jones' letter) who had crossed the ocean with her, and who had received a blessing through her faithful instructions and prayers, was present. He had called to see Mary Pryor, and hearing that she had gone to meeting, followed her thither. Mary Pryor spoke on the parable of the Prodigal Son, bringing out the teaching from it in a lucid and impressive way. It came home to the heart of the young man as the picture of his own past life, and he supposed it was intended specially for him. In the afternoon he called on Mary Pryor, and with tears exclaimed, "Oh, why did you expose me before so many persons?

Why could you not have told me all this in private?" He was satisfied when Mary Pryor explained that she did not perceive that he was present.

We have not mentioned that the passengers in the *Fame* were mostly mechanics, some twenty in number, with their families and household effects. They had lost their all, and a subscription was immediately opened on their behalf.

About a fortnight later James Pemberton wrote to John Pryor:—

"ESTEEMED FRIEND,—Thy beloved wife being part of my family, I think it will be acceptable, and proper for me to inform thee that she is bravely recruited from the fatigues of body

and mind which must have attended her in her perilous voyage; in which the immediate interposition of the Almighty Protector has been miraculously manifested for her and her fellow-passengers, whose love and esteem it is evident her discreet, prudent conduct has obtained; proof of which they have shown by their calling to visit her and frequent inquiries after her. Some of them have acknowledged [that] deliverance from the danger of perishing in the ocean is, under Providence, owing to her stability and compassionate regard to them in the time of their extremity. Captain Macey has also shown the respect he has for her, and many Friends of this

city appear dipped into near sympathy with her. She has attended meetings almost daily since her arrival, and last evening one appointed for the blacks and people of colour held in our Meeting-house in Pine Street, to satisfaction. Thou with her other connexions and friends may be assured of our best endeavours being exerted to contribute to her benefit in all respects, as far as we may be enabled, though as my wife is weakly and I am become aged and infirm, we are less qualified than in time past."

One little incident which occurred shortly after M. P.'s arrival is not without interest. A member of the

Society residing in Philadelphia, was in a very depressed state of mind, and had kept her bed for two years; but hearing of the Friend from England who had lost everything on her voyage, she came to the conclusion that M. P. was in a sadder condition than herself, and that even *she* might carry a little comfort to her. She accordingly rose up from her bed and visited Mary Pryor, whom she found so happy, thankfully numbering her mercies, that she felt rebuked for having herself yielded to discouragement; and being thus led to take up the burden of life with renewed hope, her depression fled away.

And if her life small leisure found
For feasting ear and eye,
And pleasure, on her daily round,
She passed unpausing by,

Yet with her went a secret sense
Of all things sweet and fair,
And beauty's gracious providence
Refreshed her unaware.

She kept her line of rectitude
With love's unconscious ease;
Her kindly instincts understood
All gentle courtesies.

—*J. G. Whittier.*

CHAPTER VI.

GOSPEL LABOURS IN THE EASTERN STATES.

We shall the better understand Mary Pryor's work on the American continent, if we describe the limits within which the meetings of the Society of Friends were comprised. They were narrow compared with the area which they cover to-day. In 1768 (thirty years previously) there were in the United States six Yearly Meetings, embracing about two hundred and forty meetings for worship. At the time of Mary Pryor's visit in 1798,

the number had largely increased, but towards the west there were still only two monthly meetings; while twenty years later, 20,000 Friends had settled on the other side of the Alleghanies.

Mary Pryor did not cross the Alleghanies, nor did she visit North Carolina. She began her labours by first attending the meetings for worship and discipline as they came in course, in and about the city of Philadelphia. These being numerous, and coming in quick succession, kept her closely employed for some weeks. At Philadelphia and in other places, she was in the midst of a large circle of devoted and gifted men and women, and she much appreciated their society and assistance.

She writes to her husband a long letter, dated "1st of 5th mo., 1789," describing her impressions of people and things; we give a few extracts from it.

"I am favoured with companions, far, very far superior to myself, in my little visits. There are Samuel Smith, Samuel Emlen, Rebecca Jones, dear Nicholas Waln, Elizabeth Foulke most days, my landlady, Phœbe Pemberton, and her choice husband.

"There are a great number of valuable men, but very few single. . . . The young folks are very numerous, and, I think, pretty promising. . . .

"The weather is coming in warm, and Friends are preparing to retreat, so that meetings will be likely to be

small in the city now; but they have been very large. Do, my dear, write again soon. My host tells me he has written to thee. Perhaps thou wilt answer his letter, and acknowledge his kindness, as well as his Phœbe's to thy poor little wife. John Warder and wife are steady Friends, and Nancy a careful, good mistress, and tender, religious mother to a large family. They are among my very kind friends. . . .

"I dare not be sorry that I came in the old *Fame*, as there seemed no arrival by which I could have reached this port so soon, and I hope it was the right time. . . .

"Vegetation is extremely rapid, but

we already want rain. The markets are well supplied, provisions higher than they are in England, and house-rent dearer. If neither the yellow fever nor war should prevent, this city seems likely to reach to the banks of the Schuylkill. Some incendiaries have threatened to set the city on fire, and anonymous letters have been sent to the President. I had this from ——, who dined with the President, and heard one of the letters read, but we hope this will not be permitted. The cry of fire, when it happens, is dreadful in these streets. We have had one, but it was pretty soon extinguished: I believe it happened by accident or carelessness. Yesterday I

dined at Arthur Howell's; I think he may be said to be 'zealous for the Lord of hosts.' I have not supped away from my quarters since I landed. I mostly find many Friends here when I get home. The females seem much indulged, mostly keeping fires in their chambers when the weather is cold. 'Blacks' market for the families, and great confidence is placed in them. . . . Some of the plain Friends have their black servants dressed as Friends. The older women - Friends wear large bonnets and tippets lined with white silk, and some wear white sarcenet hoods. There are many very ancient Friends, several near eighty which I did not expect. I wonder it

should be reckoned an unhealthy climate. There are no accounts from England to-day—I long to hear of *peace.*"

In one of her letters she says :—

"The Americans do not appear to wish for anything we have in England but our cheeses ; I should be glad to have two double Gloucesters sent."

The following extracts from the journal of Rebecca Jones at this time refer to Mary Pryor's visit.

"PHILADELPHIA,

"*4th mo.* 25*th*, 1798.

"Our monthly meeting. Mary Pryor remarkable in intercession for her own land, that judgment may be mixed

with mercy, and that the slave-trade, war, and tythes may be removed. Also that her beloved husband and children may be supported through every conflict. A solemn and heart-tendering season."

"5*th mo.* 8*th.*—M. Pryor in supplication at the Youths' Meeting for her own land,—for the Friends there, and for the king, that evil counsellors may be removed from him. Nicholas Waln at the close of the meeting, in like manner, for our land and rulers, etc. Truly it was a solemn time."

From Philadelphia, Mary Pryor went to New York Yearly Meeting, and afterwards to Rhode Island, where she attended the Yearly Meeting at

Newport. She writes of the voyage to Newport taken by a company of Friends.

"NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND,

"*6th mo. 2nd.*

"My beloved husband and children will doubtless like to hear a little of my movements. I wrote to dear George Dillwyn from New York, but the vessel which was to convey us to this port being ready, we were summoned on board. A large, commodious vessel, our captain a member of our Society, a very clever, sensible young man, married a few months since to a pretty, friendly young woman. We dined with them yester-

day, I believe to mutual satisfaction. Some were extremely sea-sick, but I fared better, being but little affected. I kept on deck and ate pine-apples, which our friends at New York kindly provided for us. We were only two nights and not quite three days on board, and landed on 5th day afternoon. The meeting [of ministers and elders] was at Portsmouth, seven miles from our quarters, John Parrish's house. John Parrish, our Philadelphian companion, one of our own meeting, as I call Market Street, is a choice, sweet-spirited young man, who has travelled much among the poor Indians, and been industriously concerned for the promotion of peace and righteousness

on the earth, and that justice might take place among the nations; also for the liberation of the black people. He seems like a second Anthony Benezet.[1]

"This worthy man drove me to Portsmouth meeting in an open chaise. It was a beautiful country on one hand and a fine river on the other, somewhat like my own country in travelling to Canterbury, when we have a view of our Thames and the county of Kent. . . . I met our dear M. Jenkins at Portsmouth;

[1] Anthony Benezet, born 1713, died 1784. A Frenchman, who joined the Society of Friends at the age of 14. He lived in Philadelphia, and had a passion for alleviating human suffering. His labours for the negro race were almost boundless.

she is since come to quarters at this place, where the Yearly Meeting is held. It afforded me great satisfaction to hear of George and Sarah Dillwyn [Friends from America residing for a time in England] being likely to spend some time with you at Hertford, where my mind often visits you, and our mutual friends there and thereaway; also those in London. I expect your Yearly Meeting was large, as it seems probable several Americans would bid farewell at that time. The parting with George and Sarah will be a trial to some of you, but let not your faith fail, the Master is able to raise up and qualify servants, even 'judges as at the first, and counsel-

lors as at the beginning," and make a way for the promotion of His glorious cause on earth where we see no way. . . .

"Our family of lodgers is so numerous, that I have not much time for writing; we had thirty lodgers at Edmund Pryor's during the Yearly Meeting at New York."

She recurs in the same letter to her experiences on the ocean:—

"We got a good deal of provision out of our old *Fame* on board the schooner, and fared well, blessed be the name of Him who commands the winds and the sea, and they obey Him. I do not know if I told you I got a good place for our steward

and that he saved my little trunk, containing my dollars, etc. I feel very little regret at losing my portmanteau. . . . I have written to all my children but Daniel and Sarah, and if I cannot accomplish this, they must take the will for the deed; hardly any are more frequently in my remembrance.

"And now, my beloved husband and children, may the Shepherd of Israel encamp round about your dwellings. May His everlasting love be your canopy and mine, to protect from every assault of an unwearied enemy, and be our covert from the heat and from the storm. I bless His holy name for His marvellous preservation,

yea, for the little trials He hath counted me worthy to pass through for the trial of my faith and patience; and can say of a truth that He is worthy of a full dedication of heart. I feel you near and dear, and trust in His mercy that we shall meet again, to rejoice in His salvation, and to set up our Ebenezer with the consolatory language, 'Hitherto the Lord hath helped us.' I commend you, with my own soul, to His holy protection, and affectionately bid you farewell."

"14*th* 6*th* *mo.*—There were about three hundred horses and perhaps fifty carriages to convey Friends to this Yearly Meeting (Rhode Island). We dine to-day at the house formerly occu-

pied by Mary Dyer, who suffered [death] at Boston."

On the way from Newport to Nantucket, Mary Pryor visited many larger meetings. From Nantucket she went to New Bedford, from which place she writes to her husband:—

"We are now quartered with our very kind friends, W. and E. Rotch, a valuable couple indeed, and abundantly blessed in their precious children and grandchildren. They have eighteen of the latter, some of whom put me in fresh remembrance of my own. I wrote thee from Newport, since which I have had a little voyage to Nantucket Quarterly Meeting. We had about thirty passengers on board

the Bedford Packet, all Friends. We were but little more than seven hours under sail—about sixty miles. We attended both meetings on First day, were at the South House in the forenoon, and North House in the afternoon. Second day, the select Quarterly Meeting; Third day, general meeting for business, conducted much like London, and very large. I hear, in Nantucket only, there are between four and five hundred families [of Friends], mostly very numerous. I suppose it is not unusual to have eighteen to twenty in family. We had one meeting appointed for the Black people and Indians, and an appointed meeting for Friends, and one

for others, and visited Shruball Coffin's country house, and took a ride to see the island. There were about ten thousand sheep and large flocks of horned cattle. The island suffered much in the cruel war. I paid a visit to Captain Macey's family. They had not seen the captain for eight years, as he is married and settled in Halifax, Nova Scotia. It seemed a great treat to see one who could give them so good an account of the absent son.

"Bedford is a newly-built town, and a little seaport; it was destroyed in the war. We are returned from forenoon meeting, and I wish to leave this to go by a vessel to sail on the 20th. We are going to a meeting appointed

at Aponniganset at four o'clock, and have to travel six or seven miles over rocks and stones. W. Jackson and Elizabeth Foulke are still with me, and kind companions they are. I hope to hear from thee soon, who art the nearest to me of all earthly blessings."

The Yellow Fever in Philadelphia.— Further Travels.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on the city,

* * * * * *

And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month of September,
Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a lake in the meadow,
So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its natural margin,
Spread to a brackish lake the silver stream of existence.
Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to charm the oppressor.

Longfellow.

CHAPTER VII.

THE YELLOW FEVER IN PHILADELPHIA.—FURTHER TRAVELS.

On the return journey, James and Phœbe Pemberton met Mary Pryor, and took her round to several monthly meetings, bringing her to Burlington, in the neighbourhood of which place she attended many meetings. She had only visited the cities just in time, as the yellow fever broke out in the summer, and for some weeks her labours had to be confined to the country districts.

While at Burlington, Mary Pryor met

with many Friends who had been driven from Philadelphia by this terrible scourge, which was devastating that and other cities.

The yellow fever which had now come upon the country had appeared previously in 1793 and 1797, in a less severe form. This third attack, which commenced in Philadelphia, was so fatal that 50,000 persons fled in terror from the city. Huts and sheds were erected outside for the accommodation of the poor.

After travelling 1,100 miles with her congenial companion, Elizabeth Foulke ("Betsey," as she calls her), Mary Pryor went to Whitemarsh, fourteen miles from Philadelphia, for a little rest, just going

to meetings in the neighbourhood. This place was the residence of Anthony Morris, son-in-law to James and Phœbe Pemberton, and a large family party, including the parents, were assembled there.

She writes :—

"My Betsey is with me at Whitemarsh. It is a beautiful, high, airy situation; the house newly built, the rooms lofty and large, commanding as fine a prospect as I have ever seen in England or America. They have four children, who play about as my grandchildren do. We have a very large garden, well stocked with fruit and vegetables, of which the Americans, who are a wise people, eat a good deal.

"Our friends are kinder to us than I well know how to set forth. May humility and gratitude cover our spirits. Our friend Anthony Morris sent a load of his nice vegetables to the poor people in the huts and booths yesterday.

"If thou knew him and his dear wife, thou wouldst love them as children. Their tenants and domestics all seem happy. He appears to me to want nothing but a willingness to take up the cross and acknowledge the Captain of the soul's salvation before men."

The fever was still on the increase, and the letter contains the account of many deaths in the circle of her friends. Among them was one that touched Mary Pryor deeply. She writes :—

"We hope our dear Sarah Scattergood is out of danger; but she has lost her eldest daughter, a girl of sixteen, of the fever. Sorrowful tidings for her beloved and affectionate father, [of which] I do not desire to be the messenger. She was a precious, dutiful child, and her grandfather, at whose house she was when the sickness broke out in the city, could not persuade her to stay at Burlington without going back to Philadelphia to endeavour to prevail upon her mother to leave the city; but the difficulty of removing Sarah Scattergood's aged and infirm mother delayed them so long, that the night before they had fixed to leave, either mother or daughter or both of them were attacked

and this precious plant is removed, to partake of the full fruition of her Heavenly Father's love. (I was called down from my pen to a wagonful of Friends come to drink tea with us, which is often the case when I am writing.)"

Mary Pryor then goes on to enumerate many members of the Society who had died of the fever. She continues :—

"Our week-day meeting was very large on account of so many Philadelphians having lodgings in the country. Here we meet many of our particular friends. I thought it a humbling time. We were two wagonfuls from our house.

"By the accounts from poor Philadelphia yesterday the fever still increases, and the deaths are very numerous. I

think near fourteen hundred in four weeks, notwithstanding that three-quarters of her inhabitants have left the city. Lamentation and mourning are the covering of many minds in this day of great calamity. Places of worship are still shut up, excepting Friends' Meeting Houses. The Post Office is removed, no letters sent out. Surely the pride of man will be humbled, and the loftiness of man brought low, for the Lord's judgments are in the earth, and oh may the people thereby learn righteousness!

"A number of Friends are to meet to-day to consider and feel after the pointings of truth respecting the Yearly Meeting which falls in course next Second day."

"*9th month 24th.*—Friends met in the city on Seventh day. I did not go, lest it should be said to me, 'Who hath required this at thy hands?' [The conference] was adjourned till this afternoon. We were at German Town yesterday. The meeting crowded. . . . More deaths amongst us; but were I to enumerate all, my paper would not contain them. Some of those who stayed in the city for the sake of visiting and relieving the sick have been ill, and a few have died, doubtless receiving the reward of faithful labour. The weather is cooler than it was two days past, and we are in hopes that through Divine mercy this will tend to abate the dreadful disorder. Some of the citizens look

to permanent country houses for the future, as the city has been so full. May they be directed in best wisdom, and know their true dwelling to be the "munitions of rocks." We hear about one hundred Friends met in Pine Street meeting, and after a solid time of waiting, came to the conclusion to adjourn the Yearly meeting to the Twelfth month. A man was sent on horseback with the information to us."

In another letter Mary Pryor writes:—"Stephen Grellet,[1] a valuable little Frenchman, is ill of the fever."

[1] Stephen Grellet belonged to a family of good position in France, and had been brought up as a Roman Catholic, but on settling in America in 1795, he became a Friend, and as a Minister of the

Later, Mary Pryor attended the Yearly Meeting at Baltimore. While she was absent on this service, James Pemberton wrote to John Pryor. Besides referring to her labours, his letter gives an account of the supposed origin of this visitation of the yellow fever.

"WHITEMARSH,

"11*th month* 1*st*, 1798.

"The late movements of thy beloved wife have been such that I do not expect she could have an opportunity of sending thee any intelligence; and I am induced to inform thee, that after completing her

Gospel had a very large field of labour, both in Europe and America.—*Vide* "*Memoir of Stephen Grellet*," *by William Guest, M.A. Hodder & Stoughton.*

visit in Bimb's county, she spent a short time with my family at this place. Whilst with us, she and Elizabeth Foulke took the opportunity of visiting the neighbouring meetings, and having some interval of necessary rest. On the 6th of last month they left us, with a view of attending the Yearly Meeting for Maryland, being accommodated by a kind friend of this township with his four-wheeled carriage, the Friend himself, Isaac Williams, being driver. After attending the Yearly Meeting at Baltimore, they concluded to return by a different route, [in order to visit] several meetings in the counties of York and Lancaster, etc. . . .

" Accounts will doubtless reach

London of a pestilential fever having again visited our city, the first appearance of which was in the last week of Seventh month, and prevailed where a large quantity of damaged coffee had been imprudently landed and stored. The disease soon extended into adjacent places, and at length to most of the streets, the mortality exceeding that of 1793. Its infectious prevalence was so alarming at the time appointed for our Yearly Meeting, that very few friends came in from the country. Several, [however, of those who came] took the disease before returning to their [homes], and others sickened soon after. The present cold weather for several days, with hard frost and snow, will, we

hope, under Divine Providence, be the means of eradicating the disease, and encourage our emigrant citizens to return to their usual habitations."

John Parrish, who had been one of M. P.'s helpers, also writes to John Pryor :—

"WAKEFIELD, *Six miles North of* PHILADELPHIA,

"11*th month* 5*th*, 1798.

"From my being favoured with the company of thy dear wife at the Yearly Meetings of New York, Rhode Island, etc., I am inclined to testify that in all, the Divine Hand appeared eminently to be with her, to qualify her to exalt the cause in which she was engaged : her [ministry] being sweet and savoury, and

universally well received. As we are told that the effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much, I have no doubt but that her prayers have been availing, and that she is here in a fit time, and that her life, in abundant mercy, has been preserved from the perils and dangers of the seas to be a blessing, not only to those of her own Society, but especially to such as are looking towards Friends. Thus, dear friend, notwithstanding thou mayest frequently receive accounts of thy beloved wife, yet I conclude, from the love and freedom I now feel, that a few lines will be welcome from one who not only has a sincere regard for thy faithful wife, but for her husband and children,

who were made willing to give her up to cross the great deep, that she might be a blessing to the people of America."

At the approach of winter, Mary Pryor returned to Philadelphia. She writes to her husband :—

"PHILADELPHIA,

"*30th of 11th month*, 1798.

"MY DEAR LOVE,—Being out of the way of a conveyance to forward an answer immediately to thy very acceptable and longed-for communication by William Savery, I am desirous to avail myself of the first opportunity on our return to this afflicted city, where numbers have fallen victims to the awful disease, and about thirteen very useful

Friends, who came to attend the Yearly Meeting. Amongst them was that truly great man, Warner Mifflin, who was a true friend to the poor and afflicted, particularly the distressed Africans. . . . We have been travelling pretty much these last six months, and much favoured with health, and kindly received and accommodated by Friends; but by none more so than by James and Phœbe Pemberton, with whom I seem as much at home as possible whilst so far separated from thee. My greatest fear while with them is that I shall be too much indulged. Samuel Emlen, Nicholas Waln, and David Bacon, have been this morning to see us, with several other Friends, and it is with difficulty

that I can get on with my letter. . . . I believe very few are now affected with the yellow fever, and the city resumes pretty much its usual appearance; but the streets are not so thronged, and the people's countenances seem rather more solid."

Mary Pryor goes on to tell of another plague. She writes :—

"Large tracts have been made bare, particularly round the city, and every green thing eaten up by swarms of grasshoppers, in some places to an incredible number, destroying in a very short time whole fields of clover just ready for mowing, buckwheat, grass, and garden stuff, in a surprising manner. A Friend-farmer told me they knew not

from whence they came or whither they went—all going away at once, and not one to be seen, though a little before the fields seemed covered with them."

In reference to her visit to Baltimore, she writes, after returning to Philadelphia :—

"Baltimore is a fine town, and very populous; and here many merchants reside, it being an improving place. The Yearly Meeting was well attended by valuable Friends. Our dear Nicholas Waln was highly favoured by his great Master; I thought he was clothed as with the royal robe. . . . I have been at most of the Yearly and Quarterly Meetings, and if favoured with health, shall be likely to spend the winter in

[this] city. Yesterday a large company of us drank tea at William Savery's. [W. S. had just returned from a Gospel visit to England.] He gave us a pleasing account of his travels, and of his and George Dillwyn's visit to the king, queen, etc. We went to our evening meeting, the first this season. The public service fell mostly on our dear Nicholas. I thought it a season of humbling, weighty instruction, and by the line of his testimony[1] I am ready to conclude that some of the members of the Assembly were there. I am told they often attend that meeting. I have

[1] Friends formerly called their sermons "testimonies," *i.e.*, testimonies "to the truth as it is in Jesus."

been at the North meeting to-day. The meetings there are large, and the young people solid. We dined with Edward Garrett and his family, who, from a sense of duty, continued in the city during the fever, and took abundant care of the sick and afflicted, conveying several to his own house. And oh, the deep distress and agonizing strippings in families he has been witness to!"

Mary Pryor goes on to say that she had been thinking of her husband so much as to dream he had come to Philadelphia. She concludes her letter thus :—

"With the salutation of love, and desire that grace, mercy, and peace may be yours and mine, do I sub-

scribe myself thy loving and affectionate wife,

"MARY PRYOR.

"Many kisses to my grand-children.

Mary Pryor remained in America about a year. Shortly before leaving, she addressed the following letter to the President:—

"Respected Friend, JOHN ADAMS,

"President of the United States,

"Having been near twelve months in this land, on a religious visit to the Society called Quakers, of which I am a member, and expecting to embark in a few days to return to England, my native land, though personally unknown to thee, yet have I felt secret and humble

petitions to the Father of mercies, the God of all grace, that it might please Him who dwells on high, and in comparison of whose power all nations are but as a drop of a bucket, or as the small dust of the balance, who is King of kings and Lord of lords, in the riches of His mercy to bless and preserve the President. Mayest thou be so enriched with that wisdom which is profitable to direct in all things, as to fill thy great and important station to His honour, endeavouring, as far as may be in thy power, to suppress every species of vice and immorality; and mayest thou, by thy example, be instrumental, in the Lord's hand, to promote that righteousness which exalteth a nation. My

heart is humbled whilst I am writing with fresh breathings on thy account, who art placed as a guardian to the people, desiring that through obedience to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of men, thou mayest finally receive the answer of 'well done,' and thy eternal allotment be in the 'realms of light.'

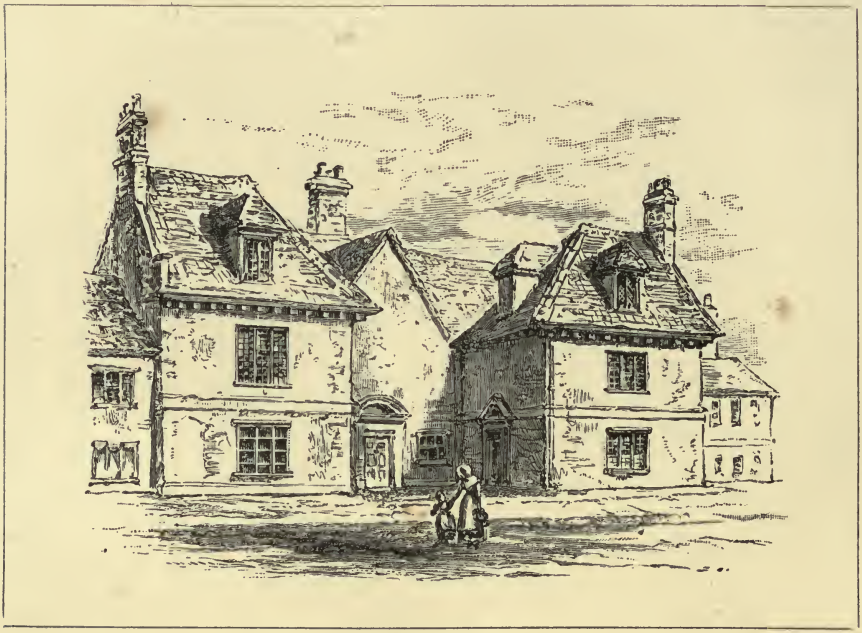
"With affectionate desires for thy welfare every way, with that of thy beloved consort, I bid you farewell.

"MARY PRYOR."

James Pemberton, writing to William Dillwyn, thus speaks of Mary Pryor and her labours:—"Her meek, humble, social deportment engages the love and

esteem of Friends and others in all places, and renders her religious labours in public and private greatly acceptable."

And in 1887 Amelia Leeds, of Philadelphia, writes :—"I well remember hearing my grandmother speak of Mary Pryor with deep interest and affection. She left a precious savour and good name in our land, which cannot be forgotten."



WATERSIDE.

Return Home, Later Life, and Death.

Oh ! well it is for ever,
  Oh ! well for evermore—
My nest hung in no forest
  Of all this death doomed shore :
Yea, let the vain world perish,
  As from the ship we strand,
While glory—glory dwelleth
  In Immanuel's land.

The King there in His beauty,
  Without a veil is seen :
It were a well-spent journey,
  Though seven deaths lay between :
The Lamb, with His fair army,
  Doth on mount Zion stand,
And glory—glory dwelleth
  In Immanuel's land.

CHAPTER VIII.

RETURN HOME, LATER LIFE, AND DEATH.

MARY PRYOR returned in safety to her family. It was thought by them that she never entirely recovered from the effects of the hardships she had endured in her voyage out. But she lived nearly sixteen years after her mission in America, and paid an acceptable visit to Friends in Ireland.

In 1799 she was called to sorrow with her son Nathanael, whose wife (Mary Pattison) died, leaving him with an infant daughter, named Mary Maden.

In 1802, Ann Pryor was married to Peter Payne, of Cheapside. She was thirty years of age at the time of her marriage, a graceful, lovely-looking woman.[1] Only Samuel remained at Waterside with his parents.

Mary Pryor became the fond grandmother of seventeen grandchildren, and some of the older ones were largely influenced by her. She lived to see two great-grandchildren (the son and daughter of Mary Tylor, *née* Savory), and in these little ones she

[1] Ann Payne had three children: Reuben Craven, who resided at Bridgwater, and who married Elizabeth Rickman Horne, of Hook, near Basingstoke; Mary, married to John Phillips, of Tottenham; and Ann, to Joseph Hancock Balkwill, of Plymouth.

took especial delight. Her manner towards little children was particularly winning.

The grandchildren used to ask her to tell them the story of her shipwreck, and one of them remembered saying, "But wast thou not frightened, grandmother?" The reply fastened itself indelibly on her mind: "No, my child — my God has preserved me through a long life without fear."

Among family events, we may mention, in 1805, her son Nathanael's second marriage, with Elizabeth Gregory,[1] of Nottingham, who was a true

[1] In 1819 Mary Pryor's grandson, William Hack, married E. G.'s niece, Melicent Holtham, also of Nottingham.

and tender mother to his child, during the remainder of her suffering life. Mary Maden Pryor died of consumption at the age of twelve. Elizabeth Pryor was associated with Elizabeth Fry in prison work.

The grandchildren loved to play in the garden at Waterside, where they were often joined by the children of John Squire, who was brother to William Pryor's wife. He had died in France, and his widow went to reside at Hertford. Two venerable and beloved daughters of the family, Frances Octavia and Louisa Squire, remain to this day (1887). and tell (as if it were but of yesterday) of the happy times enjoyed at Waterside. They speak of

Mary Pryor with warm love, describing her as most attractive to children.

In 1806, an event of touching interest was the death of an infant granddaughter, Priscilla Hack, who was taken by her mother for change to Hertford, and from the home of the grandparents passed into the Home above. The aged Frances Squire vividly recalls the beautiful features of the little baby, as she saw her in her last sleep.

Mary Pryor kept up a correspondence with her eldest grandson, Daniel Pryor Hack, who was deeply attached to her, and old enough to appreciate her Christian character and experience. In a letter written in 1809, after

referring to various subjects of interest, she ends with these words :—

"May thou, my beloved grandson, be preserved from every hurtful thing, so that He who is now in adorable mercy thy morning light, may so continue His heavenly love and life, as to become thy evening song, is the desire of thy affectionate grandmother."

In a letter to him in 1813, there is a reference to her daughter Savory, also to Mary Savory's grandchildren.[1]

"Thy cousins [Henry and Mary Tylor] are lodging near us, and our

[1] M. P.'s descendants now number more than one hundred and seventy, about one hundred of these being members of the Society she loved so well.

two little great-grandchildren[1] are frequently in and out. Thy aunt Savory left us this afternoon. She only spent one night at Hertford, to attend our meeting. I think I never thought more of her company, because it was evident her great Master sent her."

In the latter part of the letter she shows that her interest in America remained unabated. After speaking of attending the marriage of William Manser and Priscilla Tylor, she adds :—

"Grandfather and myself paid a short visit to thy Uncle and Aunt Payne at Tottenham, where the mar-

[1] The late Joseph Savory Tylor, M.D., and Elizabeth, who married the late Edmund Pace. She died in 1870.

riage was solemnised. Dear Susanna Horne [a minister who had recently been to America] was with us; we went in the coach with her, so that I had an opportunity to inquire after some of my American friends, which, thou must think, with her company, was a great treat."

In 1814, Mary Pryor was brought into sympathy with the same beloved grandson, who, with three other young men, was committed to Chelmsford gaol, for upholding the testimony of the Society of Friends against war. She writes to him in a strain of thanksgiving that he was "willing to suffer for the glorious cause of truth and righteousness in the earth."

She adds:—"May the blessing of the everlasting Shepherd rest upon thee and on thy companions, and sweeten your confinement by the enjoyment of His life-giving presence, which is better than even natural life; and may His supporting arm be underneath to sustain in all your low, dipping seasons: for, doubtless, you will have some of these, which I believe are good for us, as they tend to deepen in the root of life."

Mary Pryor attended the Yearly Meeting in 1814, and enjoyed the society and ministrations of some earnest ministers, with whom she mingled both in the meetings and socially at her daughter Savory's house, where

she was lodging. Stephen Grellet, whose name had been placed on the roll of ministers while she was in America, was there, and "paid," as she says, "a precious visit of Gospel love to the family." Her daughter, Sarah Hack, with her children, Mary and Ann, who were on their way from "York school," also shared in this visit.

Mary Pryor loved, above all things, to the end of her life to testify to the goodness of her God, and it continued to be her great desire to encourage others to walk in the path of obedience.

Her last illness seemed to be "a gradual decay of nature." Her son William[1] writes to his sister, Ann

[1] William Pryor was the father of John Pryor,

Payne, at Wellington, about two weeks before her death :—

"Having been twice to Hertford lately, on account of our dear mother's increasing weakness, I thought I should be comfortable to give thee as clear an account of the dear woman as I was able, lest, on account of the distance thou art from her, thou might not suppose her so weak as I really think she is. She keeps her bed till between three and four in the afternoon, and when she is removed to her easy chair

formerly of Bedford Square, London; latterly, of Hillbrow, Reigate. J. P. died in 1877, at the age of eighty-one. He survived his brother, William Squire Pryor, and his sister, Sarah Waite, and was the last of M. P.'s descendants who bore the name of Pryor.

in the same room, the exertion seems almost more than she has strength to support, from her breath being so very short that it is with great difficulty she expresses what she wishes. When I left her she gave me directions about her funeral, and the care she wished might be taken of our dear father, which thou mayest suppose was very affecting. Sarah Savory[1] went down on Seventh day afternoon, and I hope will continue, for it certainly is hardly proper she should be left. Our dear father sits much with her, and I

[1] Mary Savory had three daughters — Mary, referred to before; Sarah, who married Edward Paull; and Rachel, who remained unmarried; she became a minister of the Gospel.

think in his health is bravely, but at times very low; he will need all the comfort his children can afford."

During this illness she said that she was "enabled to rely with confidence on the merits and intercession of her Redeemer," adding, "To sit at the feet of my beloved Lord in His kingdom is more than I deserve, but not more than I covet; I know it is by grace we are saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves: it is the gift of God." At another time she said, "What a favour, a blessed favour, to have nothing to do but to wait for the last summons! O Lord Jesus, my Saviour, be pleased to deal mercifully with Thy poor handmaid, who hath

nothing to depend on but Thy mercy." With her last breath she named the "Name which is above every name." She died early in 1815, aged 77 years.

The funeral took place at Hertford, and the hospitable home was filled with children and grandchildren, who gathered there to pay the last tribute of affection and respect to her whom they and many others had so justly loved and honoured.

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